

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8037

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

UNCLAS PRETORIA 3404

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: RH, PINT, PINS

SUBJECT: SITHOLE RETURNS TO RHODESIA

REF: PRETORIA 3325

1. SUMMARY: ZANU LEADER NDABANINGI SITHOLE RETURNED TO RHODESIA JULY 10 FROM A TWO-YEAR EXILE. HE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE CURRENT ANGOLA-AMERICAN INITIATIVE AND MOVES TOWARD MAJORITY RULE AND ASSERTED THAT IN A FREE ELECTION HE WOULD BE ELECTED HEAD OF STATE. END SUMMARY.

2. HIS DETENTION ORDER REVOKED BY THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT, ZANU LEADER REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE RETURNED TO SALISBURY, RHODESIA, JULY 10 AFTER A TWO-YEAR EXILE. ACCOMPANIED BY 33 OTHER ZANU
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OFFICIALS, INCLUDING HIS DEPUTY KESIWI MALINDI, SITHOLE'S ARRIVAL WAS UNEVENTFUL, IN PART BECAUSE ANTI-TERRORIST MILITARY UNITS HAD SURROUNDED THE AIRPORT AND THE POLICE HAD LIMITED THE WELCOMING PARTY TO 100 SUPPORTERS. AFTER CLEARING IMMIGRATION FORMALITIES, THE ZANU LEADERS DROVE TO A NEARBY TOWNSHIP STADIUM WHERE THEY RECEIVED A WARM WELCOME FROM THEIR

SUPPORTERS (LIMITED BY THE POLICE TO 3000). SITHOLE REPORTEDLY RECEIVED THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE DURING HIS SPEECH WHEN HE MAMBASTED THE FRONTLINE STATES AND THE OAU FOR SUPPORTING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE SAID HE HAD RETURNED TO RECONCILE ALL ZIMBABWIANS AND THE ACHIEVE AN ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT SO THE FIGHTING COULD FINALLY STOP.

3. SITHOLE REPORTEDLY TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE UNRESERVEDLY SUPPORTED THE CURRENT ANGOLA-AMERICAN INITIATIVE TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO RHODESIA'S PROBLEMS. ASKED ABOUT HIS RECENT CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM, SITHOLE SAID THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TERRORISM AND THE ARMED STRUGGLE. THE GOAL OF THE LATTER, HE SAID, WAS TO ATTAIN MAJORITY RULE, AND IF IT COULD BE ACHIEVED, THEN THE FIGHTING HAD TO STOP. IF THERE WERE, HE ASSERTED, A FREE ELECTION BASED ON ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE, HE WOULD BE ELECTED HEAD OF STATE IN A FREE ZIMBABWE.

4. SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA REPORT SITHOLE IS EXPECTED TO SPEND THE NEXT FOUR TO SIX WEEKS CANVASSING SUPPORT FOR HIMSELF AND ZANU THROUGHOUT RHODESIA. HE IS ALSO EXPECTED TO HAVE TALKS WITH MEMBERS OF BISHOP ABEL MUZORWEA'S UNITED AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL THIS WEEK IN ANTICIPATION OF MUZOREWA'S REPORTED PLAN TO RETURN TO RHODESIA
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JULY 17. HE SAID HE HAD NO PLANS AT THE MOMENT TO MEET PERSONALLY WITH PRIME MINISTER IAN SMITH.

5. SITHOLE DISCRIBED AS LUDICROUS A REPORT IN A LONDON NEWSPAPER QUOTING ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT KAUNDA TO THE EFFECT THAT HE HAD "DONE A DEAL" WITH GEN. HENDRIK VAN DEN BERGH, HEAD OF SOUTH AFRICAN'S BUREAU OF STATE SECURITY TO ENABLE HIM TO GET BACK INTO RHODESIA. RHODESIAN JUSTICE MINISTER HILLARY SQUIRES SAID SITHOLE'S DETENTION ORDER HAD BEEN REVOKED BECAUSE HE HAD DENOUNCED TERRORISM.BOWDLER

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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